

American Canal Society Canal Index

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|---|---|--------------|-------------------|-------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|--------------|---|-------------|--------|----|-----------|---|-------------|--|----|-----------|---|--|--|--|--|---|--------------|--|--|-----------|-----------|
| <p>CANAL Lehigh Canals, (Lehigh Coal & Nav.)</p> <p>STATE/PROVINCE: Pennsylvania</p> <p>COUNTIES: Northampton, Lehigh, Carbon and Luzerne</p> <p>LOCATION (Endpoints of Canal): Easton, Pa. to White Haven, Pa.</p> <p>TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS:</p> | <p>STATUS: Partially abandoned, partially restored.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 15%;">DATES IN USE</td> <td style="width: 15%;">CANAL</td> <td style="width: 15%;">LENGTH SLACKWATER</td> <td style="width: 15%;">TOTAL</td> <td style="width: 15%;">LIFT LOCKS No. / SIZE</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="4" style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-size: small;">ENLARGEMENTS</td> <td>1</td> <td>1829- Lower</td> <td>(some)</td> <td>46</td> <td>44 22x100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>1838- Upper</td> <td></td> <td>26</td> <td>29 20x100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Total</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>72</td> <td>73</td> </tr> </table> | | DATES IN USE | CANAL | LENGTH SLACKWATER | TOTAL | LIFT LOCKS No. / SIZE | ENLARGEMENTS | 1 | 1829- Lower | (some) | 46 | 44 22x100 | 2 | 1838- Upper | | 26 | 29 20x100 | 3 | | | | | 4 | Total | | | 72 | 73 |
| | DATES IN USE | CANAL | LENGTH SLACKWATER | TOTAL | LIFT LOCKS No. / SIZE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | 4 | Total | | | 72 | 73 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:</p> <p>In June of 1829 the two-way section of the regular "Lehigh Canal" was completed. No longer was it necessary for arks or boats going down the bear trap lock system to be dismantled and sold in Philadelphia. Now the boats could be returned upstream via the canal. The entire project had taken only two years to complete, from Mauch Chunk to Easton. The Delaware Division of the Pennsylvania Canal System, authorized in 1827 for completion in 1829, was not opened for its entire length until 1832, much to the annoyance of the impatient manager of the Lehigh Canal System.</p> <p>Josiah White turned his attention in the meantime to a possible market for coal in New York via the Morris Canal, which was then being constructed to join the Lehigh Canal at Easton. With admirable foresight Josiah White had made the locks on his Lehigh Canal large enough to handle boats of 150 ton capacity and he urged the Morris Canal builders to do likewise. However, despite all his pleas, the Morris Canal was built with locks comparable to those of the Union Canal and hence was handicapped from the very outset.</p> <p>With water routes finally completed to both New York and Philadelphia, Josiah White now turned his attention westward, envisioning a combination canal and rail route to make connections with the Susquehanna North Branch Canal. His first move in this direction was to provide a canal from Mauch Chunk north to the town of White Haven (named in his honor) along a particularly rugged stretch of the Lehigh. All the experts said this would require locks of such tremendous lift that the project was out of the question. Nevertheless Josiah tackled the job, building a series of locks larger than any yet in existence in this country. They were 20 feet in width, 100 feet in length with a maximum lift of a full thirty feet. The Canal Commissioners, who inspected the works in 1838, glowed in their praise: "We passed through a succession of the largest, best-constructed and most easily managed locks within our knowledge and of such magnitude as greatly to exceed any public works in the whole United States. We were filled with admiration and delight when we examined these stupendous works, which have made the Lehigh from a shallow, wild, useless stream into a calm and beautiful river, suited for all purposes of navigation, either for trade or pleasure."</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANALS PRESENT:</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY:</p> <p>"Amazing Pa. Canals" Many other articles and booklets on file at Canal Museum, Hugh Moore Park, Easton</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, PHOTOS, DRAWINGS (CEHR, HAER, HABS, etc.):</p> <p>Many slides and photos in Easton Canal Museum</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Continued on the reverse side)</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>EXISTING OR RECOMMENDED LANDMARK STATUS (CEHR, National Register, etc.):</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: Wm. H. Shank, 809 Rathton Rd., York, Pa. 17403</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>DATE: 8/6/80</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>RETURN TO: CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, c/o P.H. STOTT, HAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NY 10549</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |